

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 03961 161701Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 3961

FROM AMBASSADOR FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SV NO OVIP

SUBJ: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S DISCUSSION OF SVALBARD

1. SUMMARY: THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S VISIT TO OSLO SEPT 8-9 PROVED EXTREMELY VALUABLE TO THE NORWEGIANS AND OURSELVES. THEY TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY IN THE DISCUSSION TO AIR THEIR CONCERNS OVER DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO SVALBARD AND THE BARENTS SEA. THE NORWEGIANS ARE NOW FORMULATING BASIC POLICY TOWARD THIS STRATEGIC AREA. THEY DO SO RECOGNIZING THAT THEIR WESTERN ALLIES AND SOVIET UNION ALSO HAVE FUNDAMENTAL INTERESTS AT STAKE THERE, AND THAT A NUMBER OF THESE INTERESTS CONFLICT. THE NORWEGIANS HAVE ASKED TO DISCUSS SOME OF THESE ISSUES BILATERALLY WITH US. WE BELIEVE SUCH TALKS WOULD PROVIDE A VEHICLE TO INFLUENCE NORWEGIAN POLICY, AND WE ARE HOPEFUL THEREFORE THAT THE CURRENT NSC STUDY ON SVALBARD AND THE BARENTS SEA CAN BE EXPEDITED SO AS TO PROVIDE US WITH EARLY, AUTHORITATIVE GUIDANCE FOR THESE DISCUSSIONS. END SUMMARY

2. NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS WERE MOST APPRECIATIVE, AND TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED BY DEPUTY SECRETARY'S VISIT TO BRIEF HIGHEST STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TO VISIT NORWAY IN MANY YEARS ON MATTERS OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO THEIR COUNTRY. FONMIN FRYDENLUND IN PARTICULAR HAS ASKED ME TO CONVEY, BOTH TO DEPUTY SECRETARY AND TO YOURSELF, HIS GOVERNMENT'S  
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PAGE 02 OSLO 03961 161701Z

GREAT SATISFACTION OVER VISIT. I JOIN FRYDENLUND IN EXPRESSING MY OWN PERSONAL APPRECIATION FOR WHAT WAS A MOST

SUCCESSFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, MARKED BY THE FRANK DISCUSSION ON PART OF BOTH FORMIN OFFICIALS AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE QUESTION OF SVALBARD AND THE BARENTS SEA--ISSUES WHICH DOUBTLESS SEEM EXOTICALLY OBSCURE FROM DISTANCE OF WASHINGTON, BUT VERY REAL FROM VANTAGE POINT OF A COUNTRY NEIGHBORING USSR'S KOLA PENINSULA MILITARY COMPLEX.

3. NOT SURPRISINGLY, NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS AND PRESS FOCUSED THEIR ATTENTION ON SVALBARD ISSUE. THIS IS AN EXPOSED AREA OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND NORWAY, AND ONE THAT IMPACTS DIRECTLY ON THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AS WELL. NORWAY'S SVALBARD POLICY WILL, IN ADDITION, BE DISCUSSED BY THE PARLIAMENT IN ITS FALL SESSION. THE PRESS PLAYED UP FACT THAT U.S. IS REVIEWING ITS POLICY TOWARD SVALBARD AREA PRECISELY BECAUSE MANY NORWEGIANS HAVE LOOKED FOR SOME SIGN OF GREATER U.S. INTEREST IN THE ARCTIC AREA, AS A POLITICAL COUNTER-WEIGHT AND DETERRENT TO SOVIET PRESSURE. BY SAME TOKEN, HOWEVER, EXPECTATIONS HAVE BEEN CREATED WHICH I SINCERELY HOPE WE CAN FULFILL BY RESULTS FLOWING FROM INTERAGENCY STUDY PRESENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION.

4. AS INDICATED IN PREVIOUS MESSAGES, NORWAY IS GOING THROUGH CRUCIAL PHASE OF FORMULATING ITS OWN BASIC POLICIES TOWARD SVALBARD-BARENTS SEA REGION, SPURRED ON BY ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH USSR OVER DIVISION OF BARENTS SEA CONTINENTAL SHELF AND THE POLICY CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN OIL EXPLORATION THERE. USSR HAS PLAYED SKILLFULLY UPON NORWAY'S RESURGENT NATIONALISM AND SENSITIVITY TO SOVIET STRATEGIC INTEREST IN AN UNDISTURBED NAVAL PASSAGE TO NORTH ATLANTIC TO ENCOURAGE NORWAY TO EXCLUDE ALL FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES FROM OPERATING IN BARENTS SEA. SOME NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS ARE UNEASY--AS I AM-- OVER THE LONGER-TERM POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF A DECISION TO EXCLUDE FOREIGN ECONOMIC INTERESTS FROM BARENTS SEA. THEY LOOK FOR AN INCREASE, NOT A DECREASE, IN ALLIED PRESENCE AND SEE THE DANGER THAT A CONFRONTATION WITH ALLIES OVER ISSUE OF DRILLING IN BARENTS SEA CAN ONLY BENEFIT USSR. KEY OFFICIALS LIKE FRYDENLUND AND PRIME MINISTER ARE YET TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS ON THE BASIC ISSUES AT STAKE.

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PAGE 03 OSLO 03961 161701Z

5. FRYDENLUND HAS AGREED TO HOLD BILATERAL TALKS WITH US ON THE ARCTIC AND HOPEFULLY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE REVIEWING OUR POLICY WILL DETER THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT FROM MAKING ANY PREMATURE DECISIONS. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT NORWAY CAN BE INFLUENCED IN WHAT IT DECIDES PROVIDED WE KNOW OURSELVES WHAT WE WOULD LIKE THE NORWEGIANS TO DO, AND DEMONSTRATE TO THEM AS WELL AS THE USSR THAT WE ARE DETERMINED TO PROTECT OUR INTERESTS IN THIS ARCTIC AREA.

6. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, FROM OUR STANDPOINT THAT

THE PROPOSED NSC STUDY ON SVALBARD AND BARENTS SEA AREA  
MOVE AHEAD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE, UNDER YOUR GENERAL DIRECTION.  
I LOOK FORWARD TO BEING PROVIDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH  
ADDITIONAL AUTHORITATIVE GUIDANCE ON THE DIRECTION IN WHICH I  
SHOULD SEEK TO MOVE WITH THE NORWEGIANS. THE SOONER WE RECEIVE  
THIS GUIDANCE, THE SOONER WE CAN BEGIN OUR BILATERAL  
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE NORWEGIANS AND REDUCE THE DANGER THAT  
THEY WILL MAKE DECISIONS WITHOUT FULL KNOWLEDGE OF OUR  
POSITION.

7. HOPEFULLY, THE STUDY WOULD ALSO ADDRESS OTHER MATTERS  
WHICH WOULD SEEM FROM HERE TO BE NECESSARY TO DEFEND OUR  
INTERESTS ADEQUATELY IN THE AREA, NAMELY THE NEED (A) TO  
DEVOTE GREATER U.S. RESOURCES TO ARCTIC PROBLEMS AND  
(B) TO STRUCTURE THE DEPARTMENTS ORGANIZATION SO IT CAN  
PROVIDE FOREIGN POLICY LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION IN  
SVALBARD AND ARCTIC AFFAIRS.

8. WE ARE PREPARING TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SVALBARD  
AND ARCTIC POLICY AND ORGANIZATION SOON. BUT OUR FIRST  
PRIORITY NOW IS TO GET THE BENEFITS OF THE SVALBARD STUDY SO  
THAT WE CAN BEGIN TALKS WITH THE NORWEGIANS AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE. ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO HASTEN PROGRESS ON THIS  
PROJECT WOULD BE APPRECIATED.  
BYRNE

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